

**KENTUCKY STATEWIDE FAMILY LITERACY INITIATIVE:**

**Summary Evaluation Report**

**October 2000 – December 2002**

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## I. Introduction

### A. General Information

1. *State demographics.* Demographic information on Kentucky's population, literacy, and economic status suggests the state lags behind the national average on several key indicators. Kentucky's rate of population growth over the 1990-2000 decade was 9.6% compared to the USA average of 13.1%.

Kentucky residents have lower educational attainment than the nation's population as a whole. Statewide, over one-third of Kentucky's population 25 years old and over has not graduated from high school, compared to approximately one-quarter nationwide. Similarly, fewer of Kentucky's adult residents have completed college compared to the national average: less than 14% of Kentucky's adults have achieved at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 20% for the nation as a whole. According to a 1997 Kentucky Adult Literacy study, 40% of the state's working population – nearly a million people – have minimum literacy skills.

The economic picture for the state also reveals some discouraging disparities. Model-based estimates of 1997 median household money income were \$31,730 for Kentucky and \$37,005 for the nation. Accordingly, a larger portion of the population in Kentucky was below poverty than was true for the nation as a whole: 16% of people in Kentucky had incomes below poverty level, compared to 13.3% nationally. Finally, 23.1% of children were in Kentucky households with incomes below poverty, whereas only 19.9% of children nationwide were from families in poverty.

2. *Initiative objectives.* The overall objective of the Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative is to develop a statewide system to coordinate, improve, and expand family literacy services in Kentucky. The Initiative has five main goals. These goals, and the major activities associated with each, are listed below.

Goals	Major Activities
1. Develop a strong and appropriate accountability to improve local family literacy programs;	Performance Indicators pilot
2. Coordinate statewide efforts to strengthen and expand family literacy programs and services to areas and families most in need;	Cross-cabinet systems planning
3. Build local and state capacity for family literacy through professional development, staff training, and technical assistance;	Resource Center; Demonstration/mentor sites; regional professional development; expansion supports
4. Develop and implement a statewide awareness and marketing campaign to increase public support and participation in family literacy; and	Public awareness
5. Evaluate results through changes in delivery systems.	Evaluation

*3. Impetus for grant application.* Kentucky has had a long history of addressing its literacy needs through the family literacy model. With the introduction of the Parent and Child Education program in 1986, Kentucky became the first state to have a state-funded family literacy program. The family literacy movement in the state was strengthened in the mid-1990s by the addition of Even Start, a federally funded program. Although these programs constitute the core of the state's family literacy delivery system, family literacy is also a part of the operations of other related organizations such as Family Resource Centers, Head Start, Adult Education, the State Preschool Program (KERA), Title I, and Migrant Education.

Statewide coordination of family literacy programs, administered by three different state government Cabinets<sup>1</sup>, became an increasing challenge as the number and diversity of organizations and programs offering family literacy services grew. A grant application for federal funding was prepared to support coordination of the state's family literacy movement by ensuring that services were directed toward the neediest areas of the state, resources were integrated and leveraged for maximum benefit, and service delivery was established, extended, and improved. Coordination was expected to address concerns related to efficiency and effectiveness by minimizing duplication of services and competition for clients as well as maximizing resources.

*4. Original key players.* A Consortium co-chaired by the Even Start state coordinator and the state-funded PACE coordinator was established in 1996 to improve communication across the state agencies and family literacy providers. Following a merger with the Even Start Task Force and the Policy Studies Associates, the reconstituted Consortium includes representatives from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, Workforce Development Cabinet, Cabinet for Families and Children, Department of Education, Head Start and other early childhood programs, Even Start, Title I, Cooperative Extension Service, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, adult education, and migrant education.

## B. Administration of the Initiative

*1. Support from Even Start and other sources.* The Initiative has benefited from the support of many organizations and state agencies, as reflected in the diverse membership of the Consortium. The state coordinator and state evaluator of Even Start serve on the Consortium, and the state coordinator is also a member of a smaller advisory group to the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy, which has organizational oversight for the grant activities. These state-level Even Start personnel were instrumental in the development of appropriate pilot indicators for Even Start programs, as well as the alignment of these indicators with those for DAEL family literacy programs.

A select group of approximately a dozen members of the Consortium serve in an advisory capacity to the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL). The president of the

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<sup>1</sup> PACE and its successor, DAEL family literacy programs, are administered by the Workforce Development Cabinet; Even Start is administered by the Kentucky Department of Education in the Cabinet for Education, Arts and Humanities.

Kentucky Head Start Association lends expertise in early childhood issues, as well as programming for Head Start. Another member of the advisory team is the state's commissioner of the Workforce Development Cabinet's Department for Adult Education and Literacy who holds a joint appointment as Vice President for Adult Education at the Council on Post Secondary Education. Her participation creates an important linkage between family literacy and postsecondary education. Representatives from the Cabinet for Families and Children, the Department of Education, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development also serve on the advisory committee. Other external organizations providing financial and advisory support to the grant's activities include Verizon and Tapestry, an educational foundation. In all, these five state agencies and two private institutions have been highly engaged in the Consortium and the advisory group.

*2. Management of work.* The goal-oriented activities outlined in the Initiative are the primary responsibility of the Consortium, under the direction of Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy and its director. The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy is responsible for the implementation of the Initiative, serving as a short-term catalyst for state-level coordination and alignment of requirements, regulations, professional development, and technical assistance across all the Cabinets that administer or support family literacy in the state. In addition, KIFL has developed and promoted a state-of-the-art resource center and public campaign base to support family literacy efforts across the Commonwealth. The linkage between KIFL and the Initiative provides several advantages: 1) a highly, visible entity not tied to any one cabinet or administering agency, but rather as a cross-Cabinet effort associated with the Governor and the National Center for Family Literacy; 2) opportunity for pooled resources from the Cabinets as well as the non-profit status of the National Center for Family Literacy in connecting with businesses and private donor and sponsors; 3) opportunity to formalize a relationship with NCFL, which can provide access to national experts on family literacy issues, policy formulation, and service delivery practices; 4) opportunity to take advantage of private resources allocated to KIFL's statewide outreach, such as toll free line, website, and the development of a training system through the certified trainer network.

Major activities of the Institute include professional development, a Family Literacy Resource Center, pilot testing of the Performance Indicators, and the promotion of public awareness and support for family literacy in the state. Under a separate contract with DAEL, the Institute also provided technical assistance to support the expansion of DAEL programs. The Institute convenes the Consortium on a quarterly basis to update the full group on Initiative activities and progress toward goals. Between the quarterly meetings, workgroups of Consortium members focus on four major concentrations of activity in the Initiative: performance indicators, marketing/awareness, professional development, and resource center.

*3. Organizational location and relationships.* The work of the Consortium is coordinated by the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL), a collaborative organization of various state agencies and private funders committed to the cause of family literacy. KIFL is affiliated with the National Center for Family Literacy, with whom it shares facilities in Louisville, KY. Unlike the situation in many states, an outside, non-

governmental entity was selected to execute the activities of the Initiative, providing two advantages. First, impartiality in decision making is facilitated by the assignment of oversight responsibilities to an entity without organizational or political linkages to any of the Cabinets, agencies, or other stakeholder groups associated with the Initiative. Second, KIFL's status as a non-profit agency affords purchasing and tax advantages not available to for-profit businesses. The affiliation of the Kentucky Institute with the National Center for Family Literacy ensures access to national experts on family literacy as well as state-of-the-art information and resources. KIFL's staff includes a director, a family literacy specialist, and a support staff member. An external evaluator, the Indiana Education Policy Center (hereafter referred to as the Policy Center), collects and analyzes information on progress toward Initiative goals and offers recommendations for improved family literacy program administration.

### C. Consortium

*1. Guiding vision of the Consortium.* The Consortium's activities are focused on expanding and improving the family literacy programs in the state in a manner that fully utilizes available resources and intersects Consortium efforts with those of other related state initiatives. Recognizing that many state agencies have common goals but different approaches, the Consortium's strategies emphasize pooling of resources and coordination of extant programs in order to develop a cohesive and integrated system of comprehensive family literacy services that encompasses every county in the Commonwealth.

*2. Primary purposes of the Consortium.* Since its creation, the mission of the Consortium has been "to improve communication among state agencies and family literacy providers so that the quality of programs and educational opportunities available to Kentucky's families is continually enhanced." Since its conception in 1996, the Consortium has become more comprehensive in scope and now includes, in addition to the original Even Start Task Force, representation from local and state agencies including Title I local grants, Migrant Education, Head Start, Adult Education, state libraries and archives, and State Preschool among others. Consisting of a rich variety of state program staff and business partners, the Advisory Board is the conduit between the larger Consortium and the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy. The Advisory Board functions as the nerve center of the Consortium and guides the Institute as it coordinates the activities of the Initiative.

*3. Operational functioning; facilitation, communication, and tracking of work.* The Consortium is chaired by the director of the Institute, Cindy Read, who lends operational oversight and guides the activities of the Consortium. The director convenes and facilitates workgroup and full Consortium meetings, guides workgroups in the planning and execution of goal-oriented tasks, and engages in development activities to ensure a continued funding stream for KIFL activities after the Initiative funds have been exhausted. The Director ensures that the activities of the Consortium are consonant with the goals outlined in the Initiative and are completed in a timely manner and within budgetary parameters.

*4. Changes in membership.* The Family Literacy Consortium was “reconstituted” in early 2000. Representation from all the stakeholder groups continued to be included: Even Start, DAEL family literacy, Title One, Migrant Education, Cabinet for Families and Children, Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development and Head Start. In addition, representatives from business, libraries, higher education, the justice system (family court), Workforce Investment Boards, labor, private childcare, other literacy and school reform organizations and the medical field were added. Several additional program representatives from both Even Start and DAEL-funded family literacy programs were also recruited to provide input from the field in the work groups.

The membership of the Advisory Committee experienced only one change since January 2000. Sharon Perry of the Cabinet for Families and Children retired and has been replaced by Dietra Paris, Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services.

## **II. Implementation of the Initiative**

### **A. Significant Key Events and Turning Points**

*1. Funding increase.* Under the Kentucky Adult Education plan, the Council on Postsecondary Education infused an additional \$2 million during both the 2001-2002 and the 2002 - 2003 fiscal years into family literacy and linked adult education funds to those for family literacy. The goal of developing a Kentucky statewide plan for family literacy in every county at the end of two years was accomplished in one year. As of July 1, 2002, family literacy services were funded in every county for the first time. The seeds for this expansion were planted at the first Consortium meeting after Initiative was funded. At that meeting in February 2001, Cheryl Keenan, then director of Adult Education for Pennsylvania, was invited to share family literacy's accomplishments in Pennsylvania. At that time, family literacy had recently expanded to all Pennsylvania counties—a goal the Kentucky Consortium decided to pursue. With the leadership of the Commissioner for Adult Education and Literacy and the support of the Advisory Group, a plan was successfully developed and presented to the Council on Postsecondary Education.

A key condition that facilitated Kentucky's ultimate expansion of family literacy was the enhanced environment for cross-agency collaboration that was made possible by the convening of the Consortium and the development of a thoughtful master plan that guides its activities. According to an Advisory Committee newsletter from KIFL Director dated May 21, 2001, "There is no question that the collaboration of all the family literacy stakeholders was critical to CPE's endorsement of the proposal [to increase funding for family literacy]."

*2. Performance indicators.* A major challenge to a coordinated state system for family literacy is the alignment of performance indicators across agencies that have historically developed and utilized their own accountability systems for monitoring progress toward long-term goals. Although preliminary efforts began several years earlier, the Performance Indicator Work Group of the Consortium was instrumental in refining and securing ratification of a common set of Performance Indicators to be used across family literacy programs, regardless of funding source (e.g., Even Start or DAEL). Representatives from DAEL, Even Start, Head Start, and the Cabinet for Families and Children drafted the Kentucky Family Literacy Performance Indicators, a document that was reviewed by the Consortium, approved by the KIFL Advisory Board, and forwarded to the federal government during late spring 2001 in compliance with the requirement of the Literacy Involves Families Together Act. The Indicators quantify and describe outcome measures of families' progress in the four component areas of family literacy and establish agency-specific benchmarks for performance expectations. The performance indicators are now being implemented as the basis of evaluation for Even Start and DAEL-funded family literacy programs.

In addition, KIFL developed a Kentucky version of the National Center for Family Literacy's Basic Implementation Training for Family Literacy in order to incorporate



Kentucky's Performance Indicators. KIFL also developed a Performance Indicators publication which included a guidance document and provided training on the Indicators at the annual conference.

The first collection of program data based on the new indicators was completed in spring 2002 with data summary available for review in September 2002. In October, KIFL reconvened the Performance Indicator Workgroup to review the Indicators after their first full year of implementation. The group met three times and has completed a revised draft. In early January, KIFL will work with the funding agencies to gain approval of the revised Indicators. Subsequently, KIFL will develop communications and training to support the rollout of the revised Indicators in May 2003.

3. *Resource Center.* The need for access to state-of-the-art resources on family literacy, particularly in the areas of Kentucky that are remote from population centers, drove the development of a resource center. Officially opened in fall 2001, the Kentucky Family Literacy Resource Center disseminates state-of-the-art information to literacy providers across the state. More than 1,600 titles in the areas of family literacy, reading instruction, adult education, early childhood education, parenting education, English as Second Language (ESL), and working with at-risk populations have been collected and are available for loan or purchase to interested Kentucky residents. The collection offers both theoretical and practical materials and emphasizes materials that describe hands-on curriculum and activities. The Institute invested in library automation software so that the collection could be put on the web and searched online—thereby allowing programs across the state to access the collection without coming to Louisville. The Resource Center's collections are cataloged in a format compatible with the Kentucky Virtual Library and are accessible through that system.

4. *KIFL website ([www.famlit.org/kifl](http://www.famlit.org/kifl)).* Electronic access to information offers both convenience and speed and was, consequently, a natural choice for connecting KIFL to others in the state and national family literacy community. Since its launch in February 2001, the website has expanded to include news, links, and publications, in addition to more general information about the organization. The website shares the same domain as the NCFL, illustrating the close collaboration between the two organizations. Online resources include the Kentucky Family Literacy Indicators and Program Guidance, a list of family literacy providers in the state, and links to other literacy agencies or literacy-related agencies and organizations in Kentucky. The website also features county profile data that are frequently required to complete applications for federal and state literacy grants. In addition, the database of the Family Literacy Resource Center is available and searchable on the KIFL website.

5. *Statewide family literacy conferences.* The first statewide conference on family literacy in Kentucky was prompted by the absence of a coalescent event around which the entire family literacy community could convene. Although less centralized meetings had been held, the first statewide conference on family literacy occurred in Louisville in October 2001 and drew close to 300 participants. The event was planned by the Professional Development Workgroup of the Consortium and was followed by a second conference in

fall 2002. In order to increase attendance and build on the partnership with the Kentucky's adult education programs, the 2002 Adult and Family Literacy conference was jointly planned and sponsored with the Kentucky Association for Adult and Continuing Education (KAACE). The theme, "Come Together, Go Higher!" reflected the new partnerships as well as the state's goal of moving more Kentuckians into postsecondary education. Some 800 people across the state attended. The stronger partnership between family literacy and adult education was favorably reviewed in the conference evaluations.

6. *Aligned data collection methods.* Without a common rubric for data collection, cross-program comparisons are not possible. If programs cannot be compared, it is difficult to know either one program is really more effective than another. This deficiency led to the development of data collection rubrics that are aligned across all DAEL-funded programs, which had previously been collecting participant data using a variety of rubrics and tools. Significantly, the Initiative contracted with Dr. Robert Popp, who conducts all the state Even Start program evaluations, to develop similar tools for DAEL programs.

8. *Customized implementation training.* With the multiplication in new family literacy programs, there was a pressing need for staff training to familiarize program personnel with family literacy concepts, practices, and techniques to ensure uniform implementation of and fidelity to the four-component family literacy model. During 2001 and 2002, the Institute developed and hosted three sessions of implementation training for new family literacy programs. Held in Louisville, these training sessions included a review of the Kentucky Performance Indicators and addressed other Kentucky-specific issues.

9. *Sponsorship of the 2002 Governor's Literacy Summit.* As a member of the Kentucky Literacy Partnership, the KIFL director took a lead role in the planning, execution and sponsorship of the second Governor's Literacy Summit. As a result, family literacy enjoyed a much higher profile among all the state's literacy initiatives. The one-day event, attended by 250 of the state's education and community leaders, also provided an excellent platform from which to spread the word about the expansion of family literacy to every county.

## B. Present Status of Family Literacy

The Initiative proposal was prompted by the need to enhance the coordination among the agencies, organizations, and groups that were delivering family literacy to Kentucky families, as well as the need to increase the size of the system and focus services on those with the greatest literacy needs. Prior to the Initiative, collaboration among agencies, organizations, and governmental units providing family literacy services was informal, unstructured, and relatively uncoordinated. While work had begun in developing overarching rubrics for family literacy providers, there was not a common data collection process between the two primary funding agencies. In addition, many counties had no family literacy programs available for residents, despite a documented need for them. The following sections describe the present status of family literacy in the state, focusing on

advances in coordination of planning and service delivery, public awareness, and legislative support that are attributable to the work of the Consortium in carrying out the activities outlined in the Initiative.

## 1. Levels of state coordination

*Structural changes.* Two structural changes have been made to enhance levels of state coordination since the implementation of the Initiative. First, the foundation of the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy ensures that management oversight for the activities of the Initiative has been clearly assigned, and through its Director, affords vital and ongoing project leadership that is vital to the sustain the energies and activities of the Initiative. Second, a pre-existing collaboration of literacy stakeholder agencies and organizations, including representatives from the multiple state-level cabinets concerned with literacy, has been effectively revitalized as a Consortium and refocused on the goals and activities described in the Initiative. The regular meetings of the Consortium have established a mechanism through which communication across agencies and collaboration on common goal-oriented activities is made possible. These structural changes have contributed to the changes in policy, legislation, and processes described more fully below.

*Policy changes.* Several policy changes attributable to the Initiative also illustrate increased levels of state coordination of family literacy programming. First, coordinated application processes and materials for funding and common measures for tracking family literacy outcomes across programs with different funding streams have been developed and implemented. Development, agency approval, and implementation of a common set of performance indicators across all family literacy programs in the state that receive Even Start or DAEL funding ensure unified performance goals and benchmarks for progress. The creation of a common set of Performance Indicators is an important first step toward establishing a more extensive system that includes the collection and cross-agency sharing of program participant data. Second, changes in the funding structure for adult education more tightly link adult education and family literacy programming and have made it financially and practically feasible to have a family literacy program in place in every Kentucky county by July 1, 2002.

*Professional development changes.* Finally, coordination of the state's family literacy system has also been enhanced by the development of a plan for professional development and technical assistance for all family literacy programs that are supported by state funds. Professional development to local programs includes implementation training, ongoing technical assistance, and regional networking meetings or training. Implementation training is centered on Kentucky's Performance Indicators, and ongoing technical assistance is tailored to the specific self-improvement plans of the local programs.

In 2002, the KIFL director began meeting and planning regularly with representatives from the Adult Education Academy for Professional Development, the Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute, the Kentucky Virtual University and the Department for

Adult Education and Literacy to better coordinate professional development in adult and family literacy. A common calendar has been developed that includes family literacy offerings with adult education sessions.

## 2. Awareness of family literacy

Focusing public attention on family literacy is an increasingly difficult task in the face of pressing social concerns such as crime, economic development, and health issues. While Kentucky has long been a national frontrunner in advocating family literacy as an effective strategy for interrupting the cross-generational cycle of poverty, until the activities of the Initiative were systematically addressed by the Consortium, mobilization of the family literacy movement in Kentucky was fragmented and sporadic.

Consequently, the power of the family literacy community to generate and sustain public awareness was limited. Awareness of family literacy has been increased as a result of the Initiative, through its hosting of the first statewide family literacy conference in the state and the forging of a partnership with adult education for a second conference.

Announcements of new summits, conferences, and new state initiatives are posted on the KIFL website in addition to press releases of KIFL and literacy-related news. Centralized access to the sizable collection of materials and resources on family literacy means that state-of-the-art family literacy information is just keystrokes away for computer users with Internet connections.

During the past two years, the Consortium Marketing Workgroup developed plans for a “1000 Hours of Reading” campaign, an initiative to encourage parents to read to their children. KIFL gained the support of the Governor’s office, state libraries, and early childhood providers, but at this point has not raised sufficient funds to launch the campaign. At this time, the workgroup is considering a redesign of the campaign to reduce costs.

As previously mentioned, the Governor’s Literacy Summit, sponsored and coordinated by KIFL, was also successful in bringing more awareness to family literacy.

## 3. Changes in legislative support

*Funding increases.* Two increases in funding during 2001 provide financial support for expanding the system of family literacy programs in Kentucky. First, the state’s Adult Education Plan included the targeting of \$2 million of funding from the Council on Postsecondary Education to family literacy in 2001 and 2002. This allocation effectively doubled the state monies available for family literacy and made state funding for family literacy available, for the first time, to every county in the state. A second change at the federal level was the increase in Even Start funding for Kentucky from \$2 million to \$3 million in 2001. Importantly, the RFP processes for family literacy grant awards from Even Start and DAEL are now better coordinated, and profile data on literacy needs of every county, which are required components of the RFP, are now available online. These changes increase the funding for family literacy and make the process of applying for them simpler.

*Increased fiscal accountability.* Other policy changes have been enacted to infuse greater fiscal and performance accountability into the system and thereby stretch state dollars. Funding formulae and service expectations for Even Start and DAEL family literacy programs have been developed in a manner that links the amount of funding available to the level of literacy need in the county (based on estimated number of adults identified by the Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey to be at Literacy Levels 1 and 2), with a minimum grant award of \$20,000. In addition, expectations have been established in terms of the amount of funding available per family served, so that service providers are aware, before applying for funding, how much they are eligible to receive and the number of families they are expected to serve. Furthermore, policy has been implemented to ensure that in counties with both Even Start and DAEL-funded family literacy programs, additional families must be served with the second grant award. This policy both ratchets up the level of fiscal accountability and encourages enrollment growth.

### III. Outcomes

#### A. Intermediate Outcomes of the Initiative and Logical Link to Longer-term Outcomes

Intermediate outcomes related to each of the major goals of the Initiative are discussed below. The logical links between the activities and the goals they are intended to accomplish are also described in this section.

##### **Goal 1: Develop a strong and appropriate accountability system to improve local family literacy programs**

*Develop and pilot performance indicators.* The major activity designed to actualize this goal was the development of a set of performance indicators that describe outcome measures for families' progress toward literacy goals. The Performance Indicator Work Group was convened by KIFL to continue the work begun earlier on developing a common set of indicators for both DAEL-funded and Even Start family literacy programs. After a series of workgroup meetings, individual assignments, and review of benchmarks in other states, a common set of indicators of program performance and benchmarks for tracking progress toward these goals was drafted. Training on the use of the performance indicators has been included in the implementation training for new family literacy programs, and a session related to their use was offered at the statewide conference on family literacy. The first statewide data collection using the Performance Indicators was completed by mid-summer 2002. The use of a common metric across all family literacy programs funded with state monies now makes it possible to collect data that are consistent across programs. Consistent forms of data can inform our understanding of the status of family literacy across the state and enable cross-program comparisons even when programs are funded by different sources (e.g., Even Start or DAEL). With this information in hand, KIFL has reconvened the Performance Indicator Work Group and has completed a draft of a revised set of the indicators to be rolled out in May 2003.

*Complete in-depth analysis of program data.* With the new data available on Kentucky's family literacy programs, the Advisory Board asked the Policy Center to revise its evaluation plan to include an in-depth analysis of the 2001-02 program data.

The Policy Center is currently conducting this analysis to develop an overall description of family literacy programming in the state, considering county context, program plans, implementation of plans, and performance outcomes along the dimensions of enrollment and performance. Comparisons will be made by program type (DAEL vs. Even Start, new programs vs. existing programs, etc.) As part of this revised evaluation plan, the Policy Center will:

- a. Identify "high flyers," programs with high enrollment and high performance on outcomes. On the basis of an examination of Performance Indicator data made available by KIFL, classify all DAEL and Even Start programs funded during 2001-02 as high, mid-range, or low on the dimensions of both enrollment and

performance. Although “high flyers,” mid-range, and low performing programs will *not* be identified by name, the matrix will identify the distribution of family literacy programs in the state by levels of quality.

- b. Identify patterns in program outcomes using a variety of breaks (e.g., newly-funded vs. existing programs; program type—day vs. evening; high intensity vs. low intensity).
- c. Compare and contrast Even Start and DAEL programs: Describe differences and commonalities based on the identification of “high flyers” and the patterns identified in tasks a and b above.

To address tasks b and c, the analysis will be undertaken in three steps:

- Assess county context: Using the county profiles developed earlier, establish the context in which the family literacy program is situated vis à vis the percent of the population in poverty and percent functioning at literacy levels 1 or 2. The primary question to be addressed in this step is, was this a high-need area for family literacy programming? Was the target population described in the county’s application for funding appropriate given the county profile?
  - Assess extent of implementation: From the proposals for DAEL and Even Start grant funding and the technical assistance reports prepared by KIFL, the key elements of each county’s plans for family literacy activities will be identified and the actual level of implementation of the plans will be assessed. The primary question to be addressed in this step is: Were the key elements of the program plans actually implemented, and to what extent?
  - Assess program outcomes: Assess program outcomes relative to the county context, planned program activities, and actual program activities. The primary questions to be addressed in this step are: How effective has the program been, considering the county’s literacy needs? What outcomes are there to show for the programmatic efforts?
- d. Review performance indicators: Based on the information gained through the completion of tasks a, b, and c above, the analysis will consider the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the performance indicators as a tool for performance assessment and the validity of the performance indicators as a tool for program improvement.
  - e. Identify issues in data collection: The analysis will also identify any issues in data collection that may compromise the integrity and reliability of the data.

- f. Consider future issues: In conclusion, the report will provide recommendations for continued use or discontinuance of the performance indicators, improvements for data collection, and program weaknesses that may warrant increased attention in the future.

The final evaluation activity of the project will be the development of a summative report focused on the impact of the Initiative on family literacy in Kentucky. The report will highlight major activities of the Initiative accomplished to date, comment on the apparent impact of these activities on the status of family literacy in the Commonwealth, and offer recommendations for strengthening the statewide system of family literacy in Kentucky. This report will be completed in May 2003.

**Goal 2: Coordinate statewide efforts to strengthen and expand family literacy programs and services to areas and families most in need.**

*Address local and state-level administrative gaps.* Recognizing that there was a need to bridge local and state-level gaps related to coordination of service delivery, KIFL reconstituted the Consortium and expanded its Advisory Board to bring more expertise to address issues of family literacy. The plan for expansion—although implemented by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy-- was developed with full participation of all the partnering agencies. Additional issues that have emerged, such as data collection inconsistencies, variations in early childhood assessments, implementation of the reading research and so on, have also been addressed through the Consortium and by KIFL representation on other state committees and task forces. For instance, KIFL has actively participated in the committee that submitted the Reading First grant, the Literacy Partnership, the Head Start Collaboration Task Force, the Early Childhood Indicator Task Force, and the Adult Education Professional Development Work Group.

*Expansion of family literacy programs.* Responding to the criterion of reaching communities most in need of family literacy services, the Initiative proposal originally specified a goal of adding five additional sites for family literacy in the eastern Kentucky Appalachian region by July 2002. By September 2001, family literacy programs had been established in all Eastern Kentucky counties, exceeding the goal of the proposal. More generally, family literacy program expansion that has occurred since the funding of the Initiative has been considerable. The numbers of Even Start and DAEL-funded family literacy programs have both increased, maintaining a presence in each county in Kentucky as of July 1, 2002. Expansion in the number of family literacy programs throughout the state, coupled with increased participants per site, are the obvious pathways to reaching more residents in need of family literacy services. Following are enrollment and academic achievement outcomes from the past two program years, which demonstrate the increase:



	<b>DAEL 00-01</b>	<b>DAEL 01-02</b>	<b>Even Start—00-01</b>	<b>Even Start—01-02</b>
<b># programs</b>	48	84	19	28
<b># families served</b>	1,357	2,705	606	795
<b>Level Gains-Adults</b>	438	772	474	458
<b>GED/High School Diploma</b>	156	263	122	162

Increased state and federal funding for family literacy speaks to the support for reading attainment for the hardest to serve families. DAEL doubled the state funding for family literacy, which made family literacy a reality in all 120 counties for the first time in July 2002. Only one other state can make this claim. At the same time, the federal funding increased, allowing Even Start programs to expand from 19 in '00 – '01 to 28 in '01 – '02. The total funding expended for family literacy (state and federal) increased from \$4 million to \$5.9 million between '00 – '01 to '01 – '02, a 47 percent increase.

Thanks to increased funding, between the '00 – '01 program year and the '01 – '02 program year, the total number of families served in Kentucky family literacy programs grew from 1,963 to 3,500—an additional 1,537 families. Thus the 47 percent increase in funding generated a 78 percent increase in families served. This level of performance could not have been achieved without increased coordination and collaboration at the state and local levels.

By increasing the level of coordination and collaboration among family literacy programs and the agencies and organizations that sponsor them, program participants are provided with a higher quality of service as the partners work together to create cohesive, integrated program components and affiliated services. Coordination helps agencies to achieve more with less by avoiding duplication of services and learning from one another. Collaboration with other agencies also enables family literacy programs to offer a wider range and better quality of resources and services to participants than they could by operating independently. Collaboration also allows program directors and staff to share successful instructional methods, recruitment and retention strategies, and other valuable information.

### **Goal 3: Build local and state capacity for family literacy through professional development, staff training, and technical assistance.**

*Develop and implement professional development plan.* With increased growth has naturally come the need for increased professional development. This year there are 52 new family literacy programs that require training and technical assistance. Meanwhile, existing programs continue to have needs for information on best practices and program improvement. Through surveys, interviews and the Consortium's Professional Development Work Group, KIFL has identified professional development needs and developed programs to respond. Key achievements include:

- 2001 "We Are Family" conference for Kentucky family literacy programs and partners (300 attending).
- 2002 "Come Together, Go Higher" conference held in partnership with the state adult education association (KAACE)—800 attending.
- Customization of family literacy Implementation Training to include Kentucky specifics and performance indicators.
- Development of training to accompany distribution of family literacy backpacks that includes reading research and integrating activities in all four components.
- Coordination of all professional development activities through participation in "PD Partners" group.

*Open Resource Center.* During the first year of the Initiative, the Resource Center Work Group of the Consortium developed a plan for the creation of a Resource Center, with a physical site maintained in the facilities of the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy and electronic access through the World Wide Web. The plan was coordinated with the Professional Development Plan of the Professional Development Work Group. Following the ordering of materials and design of the physical space, the facility officially opened in October 2001 to coincide with the statewide family literacy conference. The workgroup coordinated the cataloging and ordering of materials, redesign of space, development of circulation and shipping systems for materials, web site design, and statewide promotion of the Resource Center. In accordance with the Resource Center Plan, a home website went online one month later, providing family literacy program personnel with a digital medium to access literacy and conference information.

*Provide technical assistance to local family literacy programs.* The survey administered by the Indiana Education Policy Center in 2001 indicated that many family literacy program providers perceived a need for additional technical assistance. Responding to the need for such services, KIFL developed a technical assistance protocol that, by May of 2003, will have been delivered to all DAEL-funded family literacy programs in the state. Developed with assistance from the Even Start state coordinator, the on-site technical assistance to DAEL-funded family literacy programs is provided by family literacy experts from KIFL. Based on a model of continuous improvement and evaluation, the technical assistance program focuses on, for new programs, fundamental implementation issues, and on, for more mature programs, areas identified for improvement by the program and the technical assistance provider.

The objective of the Resource Center is to make available high quality print and online materials to the state's family literacy community. Family literacy personnel can, with a minimum of inconvenience and effort, access information that can lead to advances in curricula, instructional methods, recruitment and retention strategies, and other areas. Similarly, the technical assistance program is designed to assist family literacy programs in becoming maximally effective, as defined by the Performance Indicators, as quickly as possible, and maintaining that effectiveness over time. Through both of these resources, programs can capitalize on the expertise of more seasoned family literacy personnel either directly or through pertinent literature to address challenges in their own operations. These actions can lead to improvements in program quality.

**Goal 4: Develop and implement statewide awareness and marketing campaign to increase public support and participation in family literacy programs.**

*Develop and implement marketing plan.* In February of 2001, the Marketing/Awareness Work Group was convened and drafted a master marketing plan to expand publicity for and promote family literacy within the state. The Work Group collaborated with the Governor's office to develop a statewide reading initiative, the "1000 Hours of Reading" campaign. However, the significant funding required to implement the book giveaway, which was part of the campaign, has led to a rethinking of the original plan. The Marketing Work Group will meet in January of 2003 to develop an alternate plan that requires less funding.

*Increase private/business contributions.* Working toward the goal of doubling the initial private/business contributions toward the Initiative, NCFL and KIFL developed a proposal to the Kentucky Education Development Corporation that resulted in a \$150,000 grant for family literacy backpacks and training. Verizon supplemented its current contribution for the awareness campaign and Bell South has joined on as a volunteer partner for the awareness campaign. The identification for additional partners and investors to support KIFL's role in coordinating the Initiative activities is ongoing.

The marketing plan and the development activities are designed to bring public attention and resources to the cause of family literacy. Both of these activities are logically and directly linked to expanding and improving Kentucky's family literacy system because program expansion and improvement are not likely to occur in the absence of public interest and financial support.

**Goal 5: Evaluate results through changes in delivery systems.**

*Prepare evaluation reports.* Regular evaluation of progress is explicitly articulated as one of the five major activities associated with the Initiative. The Indiana Education Policy Center (hereafter referred to as the Policy Center), an educational research unit affiliated with Indiana University, has served as the external evaluator of progress achieved toward the Initiative's goals. In collaboration with KIFL, an evaluation plan for the first year of the Initiative was developed and executed.

Major components of the plan included interviews with a sample of Advisory Board members to assess the barriers/challenges/strengths of family literacy in Kentucky; the development of county profiles containing demographic, educational, and economic statistics on each of Kentucky's 120 counties; administration of a survey designed to assess family literacy program features and create a baseline of the Institute's effectiveness as perceived by family literacy program providers; and three case studies of family literacy programs in the state, undertaken to identify challenges and successes of programs at various stages of development and in different geographical locales.

As a result of these evaluation activities, KIFL has become better informed about areas in which their service is perceived to be weaker and can more knowledgeably target their improvement efforts. The evaluation activities also have led to a more informed understanding of the features of family literacy programs in the state, as well as the challenges encountered among newly launched and ongoing programs. This information can be used to strengthen technical assistance by focusing attention on the specific challenges that have been identified. Understanding the relationship between program features and outcomes can enhance program quality by identifying the program features that are most closely associated with the desired literacy outcomes.

The evaluation plan for Year Two was revised to take advantage of new data not previously available. This plan, outlined in detail above in Section III A, includes an in-depth data analysis and will be completed in the spring of 2003.

#### B. Meaningful and Observable Evidence

Documentation of progress toward, or achievement of, the goals outlined in the previous section is included in this section of the report.

Attachments:

##### Goal 1: Performance Indicators

- Minutes from Performance Indicator Work Group meetings

##### Goal 2: Advisory Board and Consortium Roster

- Consortium and Work Group agendas and minutes

- Conference Programs

- Training Flyers

##### Goal 3: State Map of Even Start and DAEL-funded Family Literacy Programs

##### Goal 4: Marketing Plan

- 1000 Hours Plan

- Press releases

- Verizon Foundation Award Letters and Others

##### Goal 5: Evaluation Reports

## IV. Summary and Reflections

### A. Major Accomplishments

The major accomplishments of the Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative are described below.

*Funding increase.* The substantial amount of additional funding allocated for family literacy by the Department of Adult Education and Family Literacy (through the Council on Postsecondary Education) is impressive not only from a financial perspective, but because it illustrates enhancements in the cross-agency collaboration upon which an integrated statewide delivery system for family literacy depends. In an effort to acquire the financial resources necessary to sustain its operations, KIFL has also secured additional funding from philanthropic foundations committed to literacy causes.

*Creation of community.* KIFL has been successful in mobilizing the statewide family literacy community through the activities of the Consortium, bringing attention to family literacy issues through its conferencing opportunities, partnership in the Governor's Literacy Summit, and website. It has also enhanced the quality of family literacy service delivery through the provision of professional development opportunities, technical assistance to local programs, and access to state-of-the-art resources. As the activities of the Initiative are successful in increasing the number of state-funded family literacy programs, the family literacy community continues to grow.

*Resource accessibility.* The Resource Center is an indispensable component of the family literacy program in Kentucky. It offers materials and resources in print and other media to assist with technical assistance and professional development for the family literacy programs within the state. The Resource Center houses a library from which Kentucky residents can check out books, magazines, periodicals, or other texts and materials dealing with family literacy. The collection is included in the Kentucky virtual library of adult education, extending the potential exposure of the holdings to adult education audiences.

*Professional development opportunities.* Illustrating the importance of the common benchmarks, KIFL designed the implementation training according to the results of the Performance Indicators. Three training sessions have been offered, with more than 250 family literacy staff completing the training.

*Aligned data collection methods.* The development and implementation of a common rubric for data collection across all the DAEL-funded family literacy programs in the state marks a significant step toward a more coordinated statewide system of family literacy. The use of a common rubric will make possible comparisons of outcome data across programs and across time, both of which can lead to targeted plans for program improvement and tracking of progress toward program goals. Work has also begun at the Kentucky Department of Education on an electronic data system that will meet the needs of the Even Start evaluation statewide as well as state and federal reporting requirements.

While this electronic system is currently planned for Even Start only, in the context of the Performance Indicator Work Group meetings, KDE representatives have discussed sharing data electronically with DAEL when the system is developed.

*System expansion.* In the short time span of two years, DAEL expanded from 48 family literacy programs to 120 programs—one in every county. The number of Even Start programs increased by 75 percent: from 19 programs in 2000-01 to 33 in 2002-03. The expansion of these programs represents the spread of the family literacy system into areas of the state where literacy need is high and markets are difficult to reach. At the same time, both DAEL and Even Start programs have increased enrollment significantly. Last year, an additional 1,537 families were served, an increase of 78 percent over the previous year.

## B. Major Challenges and Solutions

*Accountability.* Family literacy programs need to serve more participants and have higher quality outcomes in order for taxpayers to be convinced that this use of tax monies is warranted. In an era of increased accountability, programs must be able to present empirical evidence that program outcomes are at levels that justify continued funding. Using a common rubric to collect program data will introduce a significant measure of accountability into the system, as will the funding formula guidelines that explicitly set out expectations for number of families enrolled. The challenge will be persuading program personnel to perceive the new accountability as a positive development that can ultimately benefit program participants.

*Obtaining early childhood program data.* In DAEL-funded family literacy programs, the early childhood component is implemented by a program partner, typically a school, Head Start program or a private childcare provider. At the present time, there are no procedures in place to collect early childhood program data from the program partners, and given the relationship between the family literacy program and the partners, little authority to require such a procedure. The challenge here is to design a means of ensuring that the children's education component of family literacy programs is held to high standards and if possible, to develop a means of comparing performance data across programs.

*Literacy Outcomes for Children.* KIFL has incorporated into all trainings information on scientifically based reading research and the federal emphasis on K-3 reading outcomes. Programs are working to improve performance in this area. The challenge is greater for DAEL programs, since they partner with other agencies for the children's educational services. Curriculum development, data collection and assessment for children are a particular challenge for DAEL since they are not actually providing the children's services.

*Quality programs with reduced funding.* "Doing more with less" has become a necessity as local, state, and national budgets cover an expanding number of initiatives. The same practice applies to family literacy programs. The recent funding reformulation for DAEL-

funded programs has meant that some programs will receive smaller amounts of money but, at the same time, are expected to serve a larger participant base and to maintain a high quality of programs with sufficient intensity to bring about the desired literacy outcomes. This will almost certainly be a challenge for many programs.

*Challenges of rapid growth.* With DAEL-funded programs potentially present in all state counties this year along with the growing presence of Even Start programs, the system of professional development and technical assistance can become strained. A finding from this year's evaluation activities suggests that new markets for family literacy services typically run ahead of our understanding of how to recruit, instruct, and retain them, leading to a perpetual need to learn new approaches to the delivery of effective family literacy programs.

*Reconciling DAEL and Even Start programs in the same county.* At the present time, there is little information on how to effectively coordinate Even Start and DAEL-funded family literacy programs present in the same county, but we do know that coordinating a federal and state program toward the same goal is likely to be challenging. Recognizing that little is known about the coordination of these programs either by a single director or separately, KIFL coordinated a conference session on the topic and has added a regional training on the topic for May 2003. Through its technical assistance, KIFL is also gathering information on the best practices in state-funded/Even Start collaborations.

### C. Major Lessons Learned

Several lessons have been learned over the course of the Initiative thus far. The majority of these lessons emerged from the external evaluation undertaken by the Indiana Education Policy Center.

*The advantage of KIFL as a neutral agency.* The assignment of a neutral party to coordinate the activities of the Initiative reduces the potential for allegations of favoritism or bias among the agencies, organizations, and governmental bodies represented in the Consortium. Ultimately, this arrangement reduces the likelihood that Initiative momentum will be interrupted or destroyed because of political impasses or the activities outlined in the Initiative will become self-serving because of a partisan coordinating body.

*No single model, both a challenge and strength.* Flexibility is a hallmark of both Even Start and DAEL-funded programs, and in the current environment of rapid expansion, many programs are looking at innovative approaches to deliver services. Although this flexibility is deliberate and can lead, ultimately, to a program closely tailored to the needs of the community in which it is delivered, the start-up period can be slowed by identity challenges.

*In family literacy programs recently funded by DAEL, the adult education director may be unprepared to serve as program coordinator, a situation that could lead potentially to a leadership gap at a critical time.* Although adult educators are often tapped to write the

grant applications for a county's family literacy program, these individuals may not immediately possess the requisite skill set to undertake their new responsibilities as program coordinators for family literacy. Learning to effectively network and develop collaborative relationships with staff from other agencies and organizations can be time-consuming and appear to be less urgent than day-to-day program operations. However, in the long run, program effectiveness and sustainability depend on the formation of collaborative relationships, and program coordinators who do not pay sufficient attention to these activities are not likely to be effective program administrators in the long run.

*Time management is a concern for program coordinators and staff in both new and enduring programs.* Program coordinators frequently have instructional responsibilities as well as program management ones. Consequently, even veteran program coordinators struggle with time management and occasionally extend their workday into the evening hours in order to accomplish the day's tasks. The processes necessary to build successful partnerships and collaborations with other social service and education agencies and organizations require program coordinators to serve on external committees, attend meetings convened by other groups, and expend effort on projects only tangentially related to their own. The payoff for these activities is typically intangible and future-oriented rather than concrete and present – program goodwill, reputation as a team player, and visibility in the community. Coordinators are forced to make daily tradeoffs between these investment activities and the day-to-day operations of their programs. It should not be surprising that they struggle to find balance between these responsibilities.

*Positioning literacy issues in general and family literacy programs in particular, on the priority list for public attention and resources is a universal struggle for programs, regardless of their stage in the programmatic life cycle.* The relationships of trust, partnership, and sharing that partially account for this accomplishment are unlikely to have developed over a brief period of time, with frequent changes in program leadership, or without devoting significant amounts of time to networking. Even with these arrangements intact, family literacy must compete with a myriad of other issues that compete for the public interest and its limited resources. The tax-paying public, the legislature, and the corporate sector must be convinced of the benefits afforded by higher levels of literacy among Kentucky residents.

*Family literacy program personnel fear that, despite their best efforts, families with the lowest levels of literacy remain unserved by family literacy programs.* This unfortunate outcome appears to stem from at least two phenomena. First, every community, regardless of size or location, contains a substratum of families that befuddle family literacy program personnel by their unresponsiveness to family literacy program recruiting efforts. Attitudes of resistance to participation are a complex and persistent challenge that defies the best efforts of family literacy staff in Kentucky and the nation at large. Second, recent reconfigurations of the family literacy funding formula have focused more attention on enrollment statistics by tying funding to numbers of families served. Although this new focus is a natural consequence of policy formulated in an era of accountability and cost-benefit concerns, some family literacy staff may interpret the



policy as an encouragement to abandon efforts to reach the most difficult markets in favor of “reaching the numbers” in markets easier to penetrate.

## **V. Recommendations for Next Steps**

### Recommendations for Next Steps

Despite a great deal of progress toward accomplishing the goals outlined in the Initiative, there remains much to be done to ensure the development of an effective statewide system of family literacy in Kentucky. While programs continue to respond to the state’s aggressive enrollment goals, they must also improve educational outcomes for parents and children. Below are the next steps identified for the Initiative in 2003.

#### A. Goals for the Near Future

The Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative was approved for a project extension and carryover of funds through May of 2003. During that period, the goals for the Initiative will be to:

1. Build capacity in local programs
2. Create awareness of family literacy programs in order to increase recruitment of participants and garner additional resources for programs.
3. Facilitate resolution of expansion issues in counties with Even Start and DAEL programs
4. Assess Performance Indicators after first year and propose changes, if needed.

#### C. Key Strategies or Activities to Reach Goals

The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy will undertake the following activities to achieve the four goals outlined. Some of the activities are part of the original plan of work for the Institute and Initiative. Other activities are being conducted through additional contracts or grants.

1. Build capacity in local programs
  - a. Implement Observation Site project with video.
  - b. Develop Kentucky handbook for family literacy.
  - c. Offer technical assistance to all DAEL programs (contract with DAEL).
  - d. Offer intensive technical assistance to Even Start programs identified as not making sufficient progress (contract with Kentucky Department of Education).
  - e. Offer joint, regional professional development opportunities for Even Start and DAEL programs based on needs assessment.
  - f. Distribute “Family Literacy Backpacks” with training and lessons plans that incorporate the reading research.
  - g. Help programs better link to K-3 reading achievement.

- h. Expand common calendar with PD Partners to distribute in spring 2003 to facilitate better professional development planning.
    - i. Expand Resource Center offerings and distribution.
  - 2. Create awareness of family literacy programs in order to increase recruitment of participants and garner additional resources for programs.
    - a. Statewide sponsorship of Ad Council Family Literacy Campaign (ongoing).
    - b. Implementation of “1000 Hours of Reading” campaign, with revised plan that does not include cost-prohibitive book giveaway. Identify other partners.
    - c. Tie in to state adult education campaign.
    - d. Continue to distribute press releases in the state regarding family literacy.
  - 3. Facilitate resolution of expansion issues in counties with Even Start and DAEL programs
    - a. Collaborative Partners meetings as part of Technical Assistance
    - b. Regional professional development opportunities focused on collaboration
    - c. Information on collaborations added to website.
    - d. Model development using research analysis from Indiana Education Policy Center and Even Start evaluations.
  - 4. Assess Performance Indicators after first year and propose changes, if any.
    - a. Seek approval by funding agencies of revised indicators completed in December 2002.
    - b. Disseminate and provide training on revised indicators.

## **VI. Technical Appendix: Information on the Consortium**

### **A. Size and Membership by Categories**

The Kentucky Family Literacy Consortium is currently comprised of 43 members, of whom 7 are on the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group includes representatives from all the partner agencies and two private funders. Following are their roles and organizations.

- Commissioner of Adult Education and Literacy (Workforce Development Cabinet)
- Associate Commissioner for Results Planning (Kentucky Department of Education)
- Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood
- President of the Kentucky Head Start Association
- Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services (Cabinet for Families & Children)
- President, Tapestry Foundation
- Public Affairs Manager, Verizon

Of the full 43 Consortium Members, the breakdown is as follows:

Adult Education state agency (oversees state funded family literacy programs)	2
K-12 state agency (oversees Even Start)	2
Title One	2
Early Childhood/Head Start/Private Child Care	7
Family Literacy and Adult Education programs (coordinators and instructors)	6
Cabinet for Families and Children	3
Postsecondary Education and Training	1
Libraries	4
Business/Foundations	5
Labor	1
Workforce Investment Board	1
Court system	1
Parents (former students)	1
Other educational organizations (learning disabilities, literacy, school reform)	4
Consultants, evaluators	3

### **B. Consortium Meeting Agendas--Attached**

## **VII. Technical Appendix: Description of the Evaluation of the Initiative**

### **A. Methods**

The Indiana Education Policy Center served as the external agency responsible for evaluating the progress being made toward the accomplishment of the goals outlined in the Initiative. Because the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy has been assigned to coordinate the goal-oriented activities outlined in the Initiative, the Policy Center has developed, in collaboration with KIFL, an evaluation plan to assess the progress being made on the activities of the Initiative. A variety of research methods to collect and analyze information is utilized by the Policy Center to assess the status of state and federally funded family literacy programs in Kentucky.

*Interviews with the “Committee of Five.”* In the first year of their evaluation, the Policy Center staff conducted individual interviews with the “Committee of Five,” a subcommittee of the Advisory Board for KIFL. Subcommittee members were queried on their assessment of the status of the key goals of the Initiative and the challenges that may hinder program expansion and improvement. They were also asked to comment on the status of the Pilot Indicators instrument and its potential for establishing and developing an integrated and complete literacy program. Finally, subcommittee members were asked to suggest additional sources of data that should be considered for community literacy needs assessment.

*Development of County Profiles.* The Policy Center also assembled and analyzed databases related to family literacy from the Kentucky Department of Education and other collaborating and funding organizations and develop individual county profiles for all counties in the Commonwealth. From the interviews with the Committee of Five, the Policy Center identified other relevant sources of data pertaining to county populations, employment, economic outlook, householders, and educational attainment. From this information, one-page profiles were developed to provide an overview of economic development, educational attainment, educational providers, and/or other indicators for each county. In addition to providing information to support ongoing planning in Kentucky, the data provide a baseline for the formative evaluation against which progress in year 2 can be benchmarked.

*Survey Administration, Data Analysis, and Report.* The Policy Center developed a brief electronically scannable survey that was administered by mail to service providers of family literacy projects in Kentucky, as well as to potential providers. Potential providers were included for comparison purposes. A base set of questions about programs and offerings, modeled after the Even Start survey, were asked of both groups, focusing on program features in order to develop a baseline assessment of the family literacy programs that made up the state system.

*First Year Case Studies Report.* Case studies of literacy programs in three Kentucky counties were conducted by the Policy Center as well. Given the charge to concentrate state literacy efforts on those with the greatest needs, sites were selected that illuminate

the successes and challenges of literacy service delivery in the Commonwealth. This study design facilitated the identification of strategies of more successful counties to be applied to address the challenges identified in counties that have made less progress in their system of delivery. Although interviews were used as the primary means of collecting data, document analysis and observation were also used.

*First Year Summary Evaluative Report.* Using guidelines provided by RMC, the Policy Center prepared a summary report describing the major accomplishments of the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL) relative to the goals and activities outlined in the Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative. The report synthesized information from the Kentucky Statewide Family Literacy Initiative, interviews with the KIFL advisory subcommittee, county profile data, family literacy provider survey data, program case studies, and other related documents such as meeting agendas and correspondence. This report includes baseline literacy and poverty information for the state, significant key events and turning points in the implementation of the Initiative, intermediate outcome data and their logical links to longer-term outcomes, challenges that arose in the implementation of the Initiative, and next steps.

*Second Year Data Analysis.* A revised plan for completing the 2002-03 evaluation activities of the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy was developed in October 2002. The key elements of the plan, as described below, reflect the primary evaluative goal of interest to the Institute: the analysis of DAEL and Even Start program data following one year's use of common Performance Indicators. The following activities will be completed by February 28, 2003.

I. Analyze program data to develop an overall description of family literacy programming in the state, considering county context, program plans, implementation of plans, and performance outcomes along the dimensions of enrollment and performance.

Comparisons will be made by program type (DAEL vs. Even Start, new programs vs. existing programs, etc.)

- a. Identify "high flyers," programs with high enrollment and high performance on outcomes. On the basis of an examination of Performance Indicator data made available by KIFL, classify all DAEL and Even Start programs funded during 2001-02 as high, mid-range, or low on the dimensions of both enrollment and performance. Although "high flyers," mid-range, and low performing programs will *not* be identified by name, the matrix will identify the distribution of family literacy programs in the state by levels of quality.
- b. Identify patterns in program outcomes using a variety of breaks (e.g., newly-funded vs. existing programs; program type—day vs. evening; high intensity vs. low intensity).
- c. Compare and contrast Even Start and DAEL programs: Describe differences and commonalities based on the identification of "high flyers" and the patterns identified in tasks a and b above.

To address tasks b and c, the analysis will be undertaken in three steps:

- Assess county context: Using the county profiles developed earlier, establish the context in which the family literacy program is situated vis à vis the percent of the population in poverty and percent functioning at literacy levels 1 or 2. The primary question to be addressed in this step is, Was this a high-need area for family literacy programming? Was the target population described in the county's application for funding appropriate given the county profile?
  - Assess extent of implementation: From the proposals for DAEL and Even Start grant funding and the technical assistance reports prepared by KIFL, the key elements of each county's plans for family literacy activities will be identified and the actual level of implementation of the plans will be assessed. The primary question to be addressed in this step is: Were the key elements of the program plans actually implemented, and to what extent?
  - Assess program outcomes: Assess program outcomes relative to the county context, planned program activities, and actual program activities. The primary questions to be addressed in this step are: How effective has the program been, considering the county's literacy needs? What outcomes are there to show for the programmatic efforts?
- d. Review performance indicators: Based on the information gained through the completion of tasks a, b, and c above, the analysis will consider the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the performance indicators as a tool for performance assessment and the validity of the performance indicators as a tool for program improvement.
- e. Identify issues in data collection: The analysis will also identify any issues in data collection that may compromise the integrity and reliability of the data.
- f. Consider future issues: In conclusion, the report will provide recommendations for continued use or discontinuance of the performance indicators, improvements for data collection, and program weaknesses that may warrant increased attention in the future.

*Final Evaluation Report.* The final evaluation activity of the project will be the development of a summative report focused on the impact of the Initiative on family literacy in Kentucky. The report will highlight major activities of the Initiative accomplished to date, comment on the apparent impact of these activities on the status of family literacy in the Commonwealth, and offer recommendations for strengthening the statewide system of family literacy in Kentucky. This report will be completed in May 2003.